

Instructions for Immigrant Visa Applicants

Overview

Introduction

You have been registered with the National Visa Center (NVC) to apply for a visa to immigrate to the United States. You must now obtain the documents required for your application for an immigrant visa. The Application for Immigrant Visa Form DS-230 Part I must be sent to NVC. All other documents will be required at the time of your visa interview.

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Documents you need to return to NVC

Application for Immigrant Visa and Alien Registration Form DS-230 Part I

Background The DS-230 Part I contains questions regarding specific biographical information required for the immigrant visa. A copy of this form is included with this packet of information.

Who completes the form Each family member that is eligible to travel to the United States with you under this visa classification is required to complete the DS-230 Part I.

Completing the form Please fill out the DS-230 Part I. If a question does not apply to you then you must mark it with a N/A.

Questions If you have any questions on completing the DS-230 Part I, please contact the National Visa Center (NVC). The address and telephone number for NVC can be found on page 7 of this instruction packet.

When complete Please send all the completed DS-230 Part I forms to the National Visa Center with any other documents requested in this information packet. Please use the enclosed envelope when returning the information.

Photocopy of valid passport biographic data page

What to send Submit a **photocopy** of the biographic data page of your and your individual family members' **valid** passports. This is the page that shows your name and date and place of birth.

Note: Do NOT send your passport(s) to the NVC, just the photocopy of the biographic data page.

Which applicants You and each applicant that is traveling together with you must submit a photocopy of the biographic data page from the respective valid passport.

Documents You Need to Obtain

Document requirements

Please obtain the *original documents* or *certified copies* from an appropriate authority (the issuing entity) for yourself and each family member who will accompany you to the United States. All documents that pertain to your petition are required, even if they were previously submitted to the CIS with your petition.

Note: Do not send any of the documents in this section to the National Visa Center. You must submit them at the time of your immigrant visa interview.

Birth certificates

Obtain the original, or certified copy, of the birth record of each family member (yourself, your spouse, and all unmarried children under the age of 21).

The certificate must contain the:

- Person's date of birth
 - Person's place of birth
 - Names of *both* parents, and
 - Annotation by the appropriate authority indicating that it is an extract from the official records
-

Unobtainable birth certificates

Your birth record may not be obtainable. Some reasons are listed below.

- Your birth was never officially recorded.
- Your birth records have been destroyed.
- The appropriate government authority will not issue one.

Please obtain a certified statement from the appropriate government authority stating the reason your birth record is not available. With the certified statement you *must* submit secondary evidence. For example:

- A baptismal certificate that contains the date and place of birth and both parent's names providing the baptism took place shortly after birth
- An adoption decree for an adopted child, or
- An affidavit from a close relative, preferably the applicant's mother, stating the date and place of birth, both parent's names, and the mother's maiden name.

Note: An affidavit must be executed before an official authorized to take oaths or affirmations. Information regarding the procedures for obtaining birth certificates is usually available from the embassy or consulate of the country concerned.

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Documents You Need to Obtain, Continued

Police certificates

Police certificates are required for each visa applicant aged 16 years or older. The table below shows how many police certificates are required based on where each applicant lives and has lived previously. Present and former residents of the United States should NOT obtain any police certificates covering their residence in the U.S.

| IF the applicant... | AND... | THEN the applicant needs a police certificate from... |
|--|------------------------------------|--|
| is living in their country of nationality at their current residence for more than 6 months | is 16 years old or older | the police authorities of that locality. |
| lived in a different part of their country of nationality for more than 6 months | was 16 years or older at that time | the police authorities of that locality. |
| lived in a different country for more than 12 months | was 16 years or older at that time | the police authorities of that locality. |
| was arrested for any reason, regardless of how long they lived there | was any age at that time | the police authorities of that locality. |

The police certificate must:

- Cover the entire period of the applicant's residence in that area, and
- State what the appropriate police authorities records show concerning each applicant, including all arrests, the reason for the arrest(s), and the disposition of each case of which there is a record.

Note: Police certificates from certain countries are unavailable. More specific information is available from NVC or the nearest United States immigrant visa processing post, or online at:
http://travel.state.gov/reciprocity/country_pick.htm.

Passports

A Passport must be valid for travel to the United States and must have at least eight months validity beyond the issuance date of the visa. Children may be included on a parent's passport, but if over the age of 16, they must have their photographs attached to the passport.

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Documents You Need to Obtain, Continued

Deportation Applicants who have previously been deported or removed at government expense from the United States must obtain Form I-212, Permission to Reapply after Deportation, from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service, or from a U.S. Embassy or Consulate, and follow the instructions included on that form.

Court and Prison Records Persons who have been convicted of a crime must obtain a certified copy of each court record and any prison record, regardless of the fact that he or she may have subsequently benefited from an amnesty, pardon or other act of clemency.

Court records should include:

- Complete information regarding the circumstance surrounding the crime of which the applicant was convicted, and
 - The disposition of the case, including sentence or other penalty or fine imposed.
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Military records Persons who have served in the military forces of any country must obtain one copy of their military record.

Note: Military records from certain countries are unavailable. More specific information is available from NVC or the nearest United States immigrant visa processing post.

Marriage certificates Married applicants must obtain an original marriage certificate, or a certified copy, bearing the appropriate seal or stamp of the issuing authority.

Termination of prior marriages Applicants who have been previously married must obtain evidence of the termination of **EACH** prior marriage. Evidence must be in the form of original documents issued by a competent authority, or certified copies bearing the appropriate seal or stamp of the issuing authority.

Acceptable evidence is a:

- **FINAL** divorce decree
 - Death certificate, or
 - Annulment.
-

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Documents You Need to Obtain, Continued

Translations

Applicants must obtain English language translations of any documents that are written in another language.

The translation must include a statement signed by the translator that states that the:

- Translation is accurate, and
 - Translator is competent to translate.
-

Children who are about to Reach 21 Years of Age

Important Information

If you have children who intend to immigrate with you to the United States, or to join you in the United States at a later date, please read this important information.

In order to immigrate with you to the United States, or to follow you at a later date, your children **must** be:

- Unmarried
- Eligible to be listed under your visa classification, and
- Under the age of 21 at the time they enter the United States.

Note: Children of mothers, fathers or spouses of United States citizens, must have separate immigrant visa petitions filed on their behalf.

Notify NVC by telephone

If any of your children will turn 21 within 60 days, please notify the National Visa Center (NVC) immediately. Please call (603) 334-0700

- Listen to the recorded messages
- Enter your case number or CIS receipt number at the appropriate time, and
- You will be connected to an operator for assistance.

Note: If visas will be available in your category prior to your son or daughter's birthday, we will expedite processing of your case in order to ensure that your son or daughter will be able to immigrate with you. Unfortunately, we cannot assist you if visas are not available in your category prior to your son or daughter's birthday.

Notify NVC by mail

If you want to notify NVC in writing, NVC's mailing address is:

National Visa Center
32 Rochester Avenue
Portsmouth, NH 03801

Failure to notify NVC

Failure to notify NVC that you have a child who will turn 21 could result in that child being above the legal age at the time your visa is issued. In that event, you will be required to file a separate petition for your child after you immigrate, and your son or daughter will face a waiting period before he or she will be eligible for visa processing.

What Happens Next?

Overview

The table below provides you with an overview of the steps that take place once you have obtained all your documents and have completed the necessary forms.

| Step | Action |
|------|--|
| 1 | Mail all requested information (DS-230 Part I and the photocopy of the passport biographic data page) using the enclosed envelope. |
| 2 | The petitioner in your case has been sent instructions concerning completion of the Affidavit of Support (form I-864) and supporting documents needed for financial sponsorship. You may want to contact your petitioner to ensure that these documents are completed and returned to NVC as directed. |
| 3 | NVC will complete all necessary administrative processing of your immigrant visa application. You may be requested to provide additional information if you have incomplete or are missing documents. |
| 4 | Once NVC has finished administrative processing, your immigrant visa file will be sent to the United States Embassy or Consulate. You will be notified by mail when this occurs. |
| 5 | Approximately one month before your scheduled interview appointment with a consular officer, you will receive an appointment letter containing the date and time of your visa interview along with instructions for obtaining a medical examination. |

Bringing your documents

You will need to bring all your original documents or certified copies at the time of the visa interview.

When to call or write

NVC cannot guarantee how long it may be before you are scheduled for an appointment for a visa interview. Please call or write to us if the circumstances of your application have changed. For example:

- Change of address
- Change of marital status
- Death of petitioner
- Birth or adoption of additional children, or
- NVC has requested additional information

Note: NVC's address and telephone number are listed on page 7.
